



Tobacco Tid-bits

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Southwest Washington Health District

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Emanuel Hospital Still Smoking

Legacy Emanuel Hospital in Portland said it would become more strict in enforcing its designated smoking area policy, after I told public relations personnel I was considering doing a news story on staff members smoking next to entrances. I had them on videotape from a story I was doing on one of the conjoined Vancouver twins being released from the hospital. Her first breaths outside were full of secondhand smoke. A month later, I returned to the hospital and still saw smokers outside of designated smoking areas— right by a main hospital entrance. Emanuel Hospital spokesperson, Quita Lupfer, said that because many people travel long distances, and are under very stressful situations when they come to Emanuel, they chose to accommodate smokers. Lupfer said security, as well as other staff are supposed to help enforce the policy. But, while interviewing Lupfer, near an entrance, many smokers stood close by, outside of a designated smoking shelter. I told Lupfer I was clearly breathing secondhand smoke. "I don't know what to say to that," she replied. She added that Emanuel Hospital has made great strides from 10 years ago when people smoked inside the hospital, and there were no designated smoking areas. Southwest Washington Medical Center in Vancouver, is completely smokefree. Staff and patients have to walk off grounds if they want to light up. Gail Helland, Health Educator at the hospital said, "Hospitals have a direct impact on the health and well being of a community, and if we allowed smoking, the number one preventable cause of cancer, we would be going against our own policy." The story aired on *AT&T News 26 & KOIN 6 News*.

Media Literacy Conference

Mark your calendars for the 2001 Media Literacy Conference. It will be held April 16 and 17 at the West Coast Grand Hotel in Spokane. The conference planning committee is looking for ideas for a conference name/theme. According to Deb Schnellman, Public Education Program Manager with DSHS, it is a way to discern the truth behind messages promoting unhealthy behavior. Schnellman said, "In the words of a Washington Middle School student, 'I never knew how much commercials tricked us. Now I can't just watch the commercial. I have to figure out what trick they're using.'" For more information or to offer a theme idea, contact Deb at: SCHNEDA@dshs.wa.gov or 360 438-8799.

Smoking Less May Not Help

A study conducted by the *Mayo Clinic* finds that reducing smoking might not provide health benefits. Some believe that cutting back on smoking is better than doing nothing, but researchers found levels of toxins in smokers' bodies did not decrease when they cut smoking in half. Smokers that limited smoking appeared to smoke their remaining cigarettes harder, trying to suck more addictive nicotine from each one. *AP*

District Welcomes New Employees

James Kisse and Pamela Walker recently joined the SW Washington Health District as Health Educators. Their work will include tobacco prevention. To contact James: 360 397-8214 or jkisse@swwhd.wa.gov. To contact Pamela: 360 397-8215 x3156 or pwalker@swwhd.wa.gov. We'll learn more about these two and the role they'll play in tobacco prevention efforts in the next edition of Tobacco Tid-Bits.

Are You Supporting Tobacco?

Before you bite into that Kraft macaroni & cheese or Ritz cracker— ponder this. Tobacco Giant Philip Morris is counting on your support at the grocery store by buying their Kraft, Post, Nabisco and Maxwell House products. The national grassroots organization, *INFACT*, whose boycott on Nestle products in the 1980's changed the way breast milk substitutes were marketed to third world countries— is now leading the boycott against Philip Morris products. Fae Jackson, a school nurse at Hudsons Bay High School in Vancouver, tries to avoid buying Kraft products for her family. "My kids beg for Kraft macaroni & cheese every once in awhile, and I do give in," said Jackson. "But it has increased their awareness about who makes what products and why it is important to consider this." To learn more about INFACT's campaign or to endorse their boycott, log onto their web page at: www.infact.org.

Meningococcal and Smoking

Meningococcal disease recently took the life of a 7 month old baby in Dayton, Oregon. Although it is a rare disease, its incidence is higher in Oregon and Washington. Clark and Skamania counties had a total of 21 cases from 1999 to 2000. It is caused by an organism that usually lives harmlessly in noses and throats of up to 15% of the population. Health experts believe respiratory distress may trigger the organism into the bloodstream. Oregon Health Officials have found that a significant number of children who got the disease were regularly exposed to cigarette smoke in their homes. "If you needed another reason as a parent to quit smoking, this is a good one," said Dr. Ken Tegtmeyer, a pediatric physician at Doernbecher Children's Hospital. *The Oregonian*.

Nicotine Zaps Teen Brains

We know that the majority of smokers begin in their teen years—but what we didn't know until now, is that the adolescent brain responds more intensely to nicotine. Researchers at *Duke University* found that the addiction rate doubled in teens, and nicotine caused permanent behavioral problems. It also appeared to elevate depression. *USA Today Health*

Renting Smokefree

Growing concern about secondhand smoke by apartment dwellers has prompted Washington County, OR to publish a smokefree renters guide. It gives renters steps they can take to live in a smokefree environment.

Tobacco Training Opportunities

Learn the best way to achieve results in tobacco control programs from the Surgeon General, state legislators and CDC experts, during a free satellite conference on February 15. Register ahead of time using the information in the calendar. And persons or groups interested in decreasing tobacco use in pregnant women are invited to participate in an interactive videoconference February 26, from 9AM to 12 noon. There will be presentations, and Dr. Sallie Dacey, from Group Health Cooperative will talk about how to create successful intervention programs for pregnant women. Registration details in calendar.

Stroke Belt and Smoking

Washington and Oregon have moved into the "stroke belt." That means we live in a part of the country where stroke-related deaths are surprisingly common. Experts don't know why the Pacific Northwest rates so high, but they are quick to point out risk factors for stroke. "In this area we have a very high percentage of smokers, and that certainly can contribute," said *Robert Djergaian, M.D. Medical Director, Rehabilitation Services, SW Washington Medical Center*. High blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and exposure to secondhand smoke also increase the risk of stroke, according to the *American Heart Association*.

February Calendar of Events

- February 2,** NW Media Literacy Center's Monthly Meeting. Portland, 8:30-11:30 AM American Lung Association, 9320 SW Barbur Blvd., Suit 140. Contact: Erik Vidstrand, 503-988-3663 1, x28805
- February 8,** Schools Task Force Meeting. SW Washington Health District. 7:30-9 AM. Contact: Theresa Cross, 360 397-8215
- February 8,** Skamania County Tobacco Free Coalition Meeting. Stevenson, 3:30-4:30 PM. Skamania County Courthouse Annex. Contact: Susie Strom, 509-427-9490 x297
- February 15,** Investing in Tobacco Control: A Guide for State Decision-makers. ESD 112. 10AM-12 N. Free. Sponsor: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Contact: www/cdc.gov/phtn/tobacco or by fax at 1-800-CDC-FAXX
- February 21,** World No Tobacco Day meeting. Community Choices 2010, 2PM. Contact CC 2010, 360 694-2588.
- February 26,** Pregnancy & Tobacco Cessation. ESD 112. 9AM-12. Free. Registration contact: Ingrid Hansen, 360 236-3411
- February 28,** Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU) training. Clark County Saddle Club, 8:00-1:30. Contact James Kisse, 360 397-8214
- February 28- March 1,** Social Marketing: Practical Applications for Public Health, Longview. 9 AM-4 PM. Cost: \$40. Sponsor: WA Dept. of Health, Office of Health Promotion. Contact: Jennifer Bush, 360-236-3709

Please let us know if you have a tobacco related event you would like posted here.